(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether necessary sanctions have been accorded to the project;

(d) the estimated cost of this project and the amount sought from the Central Government;

(e) whether funds have been released for the project; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (f) Yes, Sir. Government of Kerala submitted the project proposal "Revival of Veli-Kovalam Stretch of T.S. Canal" to the Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways (Department of Shipping) which has been sanctioned on 31.3.2005 at a cost of Rs. 362.22 lakhs. An amount of Rs. 65.30 lakhs has also been released to the State Government under the project as advance grant-in-aid. Central share i.e. 90% of the project cost (Rs. 325.998 lakhs) is to be given to the State Government in the form of grant-in-aid for completion of the project and 10% of the project cost is to be managed by the State Government from their budget resources. Utilisation Certificate in respect of fund released under the project i.e. Rs. 65.30 lakhs has not been received from the State Government of Kerala. Further, subsequent release is based on the receipt of the Utilisation Certificate from the State Government.

Flood in Mumbai

†727. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that one of the reasons behind the devastating flood in Mumbai is closing down of the Mithi river;

(b) whether it is a fact that indiscriminate encroachment resulted in decline in its capacity to carry water to sea due to which hundreds of people lost their lives; and

(c) if so, the reasons for not taking timely action to prevent said encroachments?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Government of Maharashtra has informed that it is not true to say that Mithi river flow has closed down. Available water way in Mithi river was inadequate to cater to the unprecedented heavy rainfall recorded on 26th July 2005 to the tune of 944 mm. in 24 hours with peak rain fall intensity of 140 mm. per hour.

(b) The State Government has further informed that in some stretches, the storm water carrying capacity of Mithi river is reduced due to encroachments.

(c) The land underneath and adjoining all natural water courses belongs to the State Government. Hence Collector (MSD) takes joint action along with Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (M.C.G.M.) for the removal of encroachments within and on the bank of Mithi river and such actions are taken from time to time. The Government of Maharashtra has set up the Mithi river Development Authority for studying the extent to which the river is to be widened and deepened to carry the storm water discharge.

Linking of Rivers

†728. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that an ambitious plan of linking rivers of the country at the level of Central Government is still under consideration;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in case of Madhya Pradesh proposal of giving priority to two projects in the first phase is under consideration;

(c) whether any action has been taken by the Central Government on the plan after the one year since the Government of Madhya Pradesh accorded their approval for the implementation of these both projects;

(d) the reasons for delay in getting the work of these projects started; and

(e) the time by when the work of these two projects is likely to be started?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.